

ROUTINE

Top Secret

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DAILY CABLE

Tuesday 19 September 1978

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NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION

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National Intelligence Daily Cable for Tuesday, 19 September 1978.

The NID Cable is for the purpose of informing senior US officials.

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International

NICARAGUA: Situation Report

25X1 [] Government forces continue steadily to regain control of the military situation in Nicaragua. The Sandinista guerrillas probably retain the capability, however, to launch new strikes in the outlying provinces in the weeks to come.

25X1 [] The National Guard has secured Chinandega, leaving Esteli as the only city where guerrillas are holding out. There were no new guerrilla strikes yesterday.

25X1 [] The cleanup operation, however, has evidently driven off more guerrillas than it has eliminated, and growing popular antipathy toward President Somoza and his regime has boosted Sandinista recruitment. The guerrillas should thus be able to regroup for another offensive once they have replenished their munitions.

25X1 [] Managua remains calm; daylight activity and traffic are picking up. The national work stoppage continues to be about 80 percent effective, but support for it may be starting to erode.

25X1 [] The Organization of American States voted 23 to 1 yesterday to convene a ministerial-level meeting of consultation on Thursday. In addition, an eight-member factfinding team has arrived in Costa Rica to investigate the alleged Nicaraguan incursion last week. []

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25X1 SPAIN: Draft Constitution

25X1 [] When the draft Spanish constitution comes before the full Senate, possibly this week, the most controversial item will be an amendment guaranteeing the self-governing rights of the Basque region. Government attempts to block the amendment in committee failed by a narrow margin, and the vote in the Senate promises to be close. If the amendment is defeated or watered down, a renewed cycle of violence in the Basque region seems likely.

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[] The Senate's constitutional committee approved the amendment late last week by 13 votes to 12. Basques, Catalans, and Socialists received unexpected support from independents and royally appointed senators--who usually vote with the government--to defeat the ruling Union of the Democratic Center.

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[] The amendment, which the lower house rejected earlier this summer, implicitly recognizes that the historic privileges of the Basque provinces transcend the constitution. These "historic rights"--which are not specifically spelled out--are to be "updated" by an accord between Madrid and the Basque regional government.

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[] If the amendment survives the coming Senate vote and the subsequent final vote in both houses, it could permit the nascent autonomous government of the Basque region to defy Madrid by, for example, controlling its own revenues, allowing Basques to refuse to serve in the Spanish armed forces, or claiming the right--enjoyed briefly during the Civil War--of minting its own money.

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[] The battle on the Senate floor is likely to be intense. Leftists, regionalists, and independents can muster only 99 out of the Senate's 248 votes. If the ruling Democratic Center, which controls 106 seats, maintains its opposition, it would presumably be joined by the six royally appointed senators who belong to the ruling party and by the two senators of the rightist Popular Alliance.

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[] The balance of power would then lie with the other 35 senators appointed by the King. Although they are a mixed bag, most are conservative and probably susceptible to military concerns that the Basques will gain too much autonomy from Madrid.

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[] The amendment's defeat would probably provoke renewed street violence in the Basque country. Unless much of its flavor is retained in the draft constitution submitted to referendum, Basques would almost certainly boycott the referendum or oppose the constitution outright.

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[] On the other hand, the Basque amendment strikes deep into the heart of military sensitivities. Military distrust of Prime Minister Suarez has been growing since he legalized the

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Communist Party last year, and has been fanned by the government's inability to curtail terrorist violence. Should the government also prove incapable of blocking such controversial legislation, the armed forces would probably increase pressure on King Juan Carlos to appoint a government more attuned to their concerns. [REDACTED]

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TURKEY: Feyzioglu Resigns

[REDACTED] *Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Turhan Feyzioglu resigned yesterday, following a decision by his small Republican Reliance Party to withdraw from the government. The resignation will not bring down Prime Minister Ecevit, whose government retains a narrow parliamentary majority. Feyzioglu, however, is one of Turkey's most respected politicians, and his action is a serious psychological blow to the Prime Minister.*

[REDACTED] Feyzioglu, who is the head of his party, said he left the coalition because the government has been unable to quell violence or solve the country's economic problems. He has long advocated a grand coalition between Ecevit's Republican People's Party and the Justice Party of former Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel.

[REDACTED] The Reliance Party's only other member of the National Assembly, Minister of State Salih Yildiz, resigned from the party following Feyzioglu's announcement and will remain in the government. The coalition thus will retain 230 of the 450 seats in the Assembly.

[REDACTED] Feyzioglu's move came on the eve of a special Assembly session. The opposition will try to exploit his action to shake loose other coalition members. There is no indication at present that any members of Ecevit's party or any of the 11 independents in his government will follow Feyzioglu's lead. Over the longer run, however, Feyzioglu's resignation could set the stage for further defections. [REDACTED]

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LAW OF THE SEA: Differences

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[] The Law of the Sea Conference made tentative progress in some areas during the four-week session in New York that ended on Friday, but the crucial deep-seabed mining issue remains unresolved. Pending US legislation and possible similar steps by other developed nations to provide for unilateral mining of seabed minerals in the absence of a treaty were condemned by developing nations as prejudicial to agreement on a comprehensive oceans treaty. The participants agreed to meet for six weeks in Geneva next spring, and perhaps again in the summer. There was pressure from many Third World countries to complete negotiations in 1979 or abandon the effort.

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[] The consensus achieved in previous Law of the Sea sessions on vital navigational rights was sustained in New York, and tentative improvements were made in articles dealing with marine pollution, scientific research, and the protection of whales and other marine mammals. Important work was also undertaken by the drafting committee toward harmonizing references and terminology in the six-language negotiating texts of the conference.

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[] In an effort to move forward in such difficult areas of the seabed mining issue as access rights, financial arrangements, and composition and powers of the projected International Seabed Authority, the New York session largely avoided going back over still-controversial texts proposed at the meeting last spring in Geneva. Instead, the discussions turned to other aspects of these subjects, but no overall acceptable solutions seem to be emerging as yet.

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[] Some developing nations have no strong interest in the outcome of the Law of the Sea Conference and view it as merely a skirmish in the North-South struggle. These countries have begun to lay the groundwork for blaming the US for any collapse of the negotiations. []

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BRIEFS



International

[REDACTED] //The preparatory meeting of the UN Conference on Prohibitions or Restrictions of Use of Certain Conventional Weapons concluded its first session in Geneva last week after making little progress on either procedural or substantive matters. The conference, which was called for in a General Assembly resolution last year, is to consider limitations on weapons deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects.//

[REDACTED] //The most contentious issue at the three-week session was the method to be used for reaching decisions at the conference next September. Most Western countries and Warsaw Pact members favor decisionmaking by consensus. The African group, however, proposed allowing approval of decisions by two-thirds majority vote. The Asian and Latin American countries are divided on the issue, which was deferred to the next preparatory meeting in March and April.//

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[redacted] // In a general debate on substantive issues, Sweden, Mexico, and Yugoslavia were the strongest proponents of broad prohibitions. The principal weapons covered by proposals made at the meeting are incendiaries, small-caliber projectiles, fragmentation devices, and fuel-air explosives. Several major military powers, including the US, have one or more of these weapons in their arsenals. [redacted]

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